

HONORING DR. MARCO A. MASON

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor and recognize Dr. Marco A. Mason, a distinguished medical sociologist and activist from the great state of New York. Dr. Mason is a living legend in Brooklyn, NY, not only is a professor at Medgar Evers College Department of Social and Behavior Sciences but he is a founding member of the Caribbean Women's Health Association, the Chairman/CEO of the Panamanian Council of New York Inc and the President of the Institute for Pan-American Affairs.

Additionally, Dr. Mason serves on the advisory boards for SUNY Downstate Medical Center, Kingsbrook Jewish Medical Center, the Caribbean Research Center and the Journal of Immigrant and Refugee Services. He is recognized in the Global Directory of "Who's Who in the World" and the Vice-Chairman of New York City Community Board No. 9.

Dr. Mason is widely acknowledged as a technical expert on U.S. immigration policy and he is an accredited practitioner in immigration law before the Immigration and Naturalization Court and the Board of Immigration Appeals. His principal scholarly interests include the United States' immigration policy impact on ethnic communities and patterns of Caribbean immigration in the Western Hemisphere. He was cited by the U.S. Department of Justice for his "Outstanding services in assisting immigrants with status adjustments."

He is a seasoned global traveler with extensive professional-related international tours throughout Africa, Asia, the Middle East, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean. He serves as a United Nations Social and Economic Council delegate and in this capacity has hosted numerous international conferences and field tours to study public health systems.

Dr. Mason is the recipient of more than 150 awards for his "Dedicated service rendered to the Caribbean-American Community" and was recognized in the Medical Herald in a special feature entitled "Marco Mason: A Champion of Ethnicity."

Dr. Mason's story is a quintessential American Immigrant story. A proud Panamanian-American of Caribbean decent whose life's work is a testament to the virtues of courage and integrity.

Again, I rise to express the heartfelt appreciation and gratitude of all New Yorkers and the untold numbers of Brooklynites who are the beneficiaries of his outstanding life's work.

HONORING MIKE MILLS, OF FREEPORT, MINNESOTA AS A TRUE AMERICAN PATRIOT

HON. MICHELE BACHMANN

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

Mrs. BACHMANN. I rise today, Madam Speaker, to honor Staff Sergeant Mike Mills of Freeport, Minnesota, who is the first Minnesota recipient of The American Patriot

Award. He joins an exclusive group of only 8 American heroes who have been recognized by the American Patriot Project, comprised of nine volunteer organizations united by love of our national pastime, baseball, and a desire to honor those who have served in uniform.

Mike was wounded in 2005 in Iraq while serving with the Minnesota Army National Guard. On June 15, 2005 an Improvised Explosive Device (IED) exploded near Mike's vehicle. In the explosion he suffered a cracked clavicle and scapula bones, a dislocated shoulder and burns on more than 30 percent of his body. With extraordinary inner strength and the love and faith of his family and friends, he walked the long road of recovery. There are few awards that could properly acknowledge his service.

Given Mike's incredible experience, it would be understandable if he had turned to bitterness, sadness and anger. But, Mike turned around what he had gone through to help other veterans discharged or retired with injuries. He helps them turn their feelings of guilt, shame and failure into hope, pride and joy through his Web site, www.forthetveteran.com. By sharing his own powerful story through words and pictures, Mike has said to every veteran you are not alone and you will never be alone. It is a lesson that far too many veterans never hear, leaving them with feelings of isolation and guilt and depression. His Web site should be required reading for any returning citizen-soldier.

Like many veterans, Mike is the definition of a hero. But Mike stands out for his bravery and his sacrifice for our freedoms in a land thousands of miles away. I pray that Mike, his wife, Suki, and their children will continue to be a blessing to one another and to other veterans facing difficult times. I am so humbled to honor him today to this Congress, Madam Speaker.

REGARDING HEALTH CARE REFORM

HON. LAURA RICHARDSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

Ms. RICHARDSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to show you the headlines from my community: "It's Official: It's a Stinker." And what's a stinker? According to the U.S. Census and the American Community Survey, in Los Angeles County 22.3 percent of the people do not have health insurance. In Long Beach, 18.8 percent have no insurance; in Compton, 25.5 percent. In other words, one out of four people are without health insurance. And that should matter to all of us.

Why are we the only industrialized nation that doesn't provide health care? Why is it that my friends on the other side of the aisle can support spending billions for a war, but we can't spend the same for health care? Something is wrong.

Today, the rising number of uninsured, along with the increasing costs of healthcare, has adversely affected our economy. The rising cost of health care burdens American businesses as they weigh health benefit costs against other business investments. It is estimated that by 2015, the share of the national economy devoted to health care will increase

from 14 to 20 percent. Growing health care expenses make our businesses much less competitive in the global marketplace, and restrict job creation here at home. In addition, every percentage increase in the unemployment rate results in 1 million more people becoming uninsured. Providing health care for the uninsured costs insured American families an extra \$100 billion every year.

I applaud Congress and the Senate for stepping up and tackling this problem. We need to do this, and we need to do it now. The hour is late, the need is great, we cannot wait. Congress must pass comprehensive legislation this year.

20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE VETERAN OF THE MONTH PROGRAM

HON. CHRISTOPHER S. MURPHY

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, October 28, 2009

Mr. MURPHY of Connecticut. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the 20th anniversary of the "Veteran of the Month" program. I am honored to represent the patriotic citizens of Bantam, Connecticut, home of American Legion Post 44, where the "Veteran of the Month" program was founded to honor deceased honorably discharged veterans, soldiers that died while in the service, soldiers that remain missing in action, and special civilian employees of the U.S. Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines or Merchant Marines during World War II.

On the first Saturday of the month for the past 240 months, Post 44 conducts a flag raising ceremony in Bantam to celebrate the life and service of a new honoree. The list of honored veterans includes men and women who have served in seven different branches during eleven separate wars. They have all made unique and important contributions to their communities.

The "Veteran of the Month" program officially began with a flag raising on October 25, 1989. As with many great ideas, this program was born out of necessity. The American flag at the All Wars Memorial in Bantam was damaged, but the delivery of a new flag was delayed. In the meantime, Arthur Shaw offered his late father's burial flag to be flown until the new flag arrived. Post 44 Commander Francis Fabbri gladly accepted the use of the burial flag as a temporary solution until the replacement was received. When word that a burial flag was being flown began to spread around the community, local families of deceased veterans wanted to honor their loved ones by flying their flags as well. Mr. Shaw and Mr. Fabbri recognized that this would represent a fantastic opportunity to pay tribute to soldiers' lives, both during and after their military service.

In early 1990, Commander Arthur St. John developed the ceremony format that has been followed ever since. Mr. St. John has worked tirelessly to grow the "Veteran of the Month" program into a nationwide effort. It was adopted as an American Legion Americanism Program in 1993 as a model of how to pay tribute to local veterans for their service to our nation.

For their efforts, American Legion Post 44 has been awarded the Freedom Foundation at Valley Forge's highest honor, the George